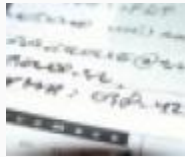


on 25 February 2013



Slow recruitment reason behind shortage of nurses

KOTA SAMARAHAN: The shortage of nurses at public health care centres is not caused by shortage of trained nurses but the slow recruitment process by the Public Services Commission.

Assistant Minister for Public Health Dr Jerip Susil yesterday stressed that the state through both public and private training institutions had produced enough trained nurses to meet the demand at these centres.

"There are enough trained nurses. However, the intake of nurses into the government is a bit slow," he told a press conference after the opening of the Fourth Unimas Nursing Students' Conference (UNSC) at DeTar Putra at Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas) campus here.

"I'm given to understand that about 1,200 nurses' post have not been filled in Sarawak two years ago. Now, about half of the posts have been filled after the intensive interview carried out by Public Service Commission, but, it is still some way to go."

The ratio between nurses and patients in the state now is about 1:400.

On the quality of nurses produced by the state, Dr Jerip stressed that Sarawakian nurses were in well trained and in demand.

Taking Unimas graduates as an example, he said, many of the trained nurses are working abroad in countries like Singapore, United Kingdom, United State of America and Middle East.

"The overall nursing standard in Sarawak is quite high. According to my counterpart in the peninsular, the level of commitment of Sarawak nurses is very high. They have the ability to cope and communicate and they work very hard too," said Dr Jerip, who is also the Bengoh assemblyman.

The use of English as the main medium in most of the nursing training centres is a major factor why nurses trained in the state were more employable overseas.

The two-day conference themed 'Nurses: Advocating, Leading, Caring' ending today attracts about 700 delegates from Malaysia and Singapore, comprising students, tutors, lecturers and nursing staff.

According to Unimas deputy vice chancellor (research and innovation) Prof Dr Peter Songan, the main objective of the conference was to promote advocacy in professional nursing practice to ensure patients' wellness.

It was also aimed to enhance leadership among students as well as to improve the quality of patient care.

Since 2010, UNSC had become an annual event and organised by the final year Unimas nursing students.

Source: Borneo Post Online